

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 057248
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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: SOPN, TU

SUBJECT:JACK ANDERSON ON TURKEY HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT

1. WASHINGTON POST MARCH 5 CARRIED COLUMN BY JACK ANDERSON
CRITICAL OF DEPARTMENT REPORT ON HUMAN RIGHTS SITUATION IN
TURKEY. FOLLOWING GUIDANCE PREPARED FOR DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN
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PAGE 02 STATE 057248

IS FOR YOUR INFORMATION. SUBJECT DID NOT COME UP AT NOON
BRIEFING MARCH 6.

2. PRESS GUIDANCE: QUOTE: QUESTION: IN THE MARCH 5 JACK
ANDERSON COLUMN, THE DEPARTMENT'S HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT ON
TURKEY IS DESCRIBED AS A "FALSE ACCOUNT" AND A "DELIBERATE
WHITEWASH". DO YOU AGREE?

ANSWER: NO. THERE WAS CERTAINLY NO EFFORT TO MISLEAD. AS WE HAVE DISCUSSED ON A NUMBER OF OCCASIONS, THE HUMAN RIGHTS REPORT ON TURKEY - AS WELL AS THOSE ON MORE THAN 100 OTHER COUNTRIES - WAS PREPARED TO MEET A SPECIFIC STATUTORY REQUIREMENT AND REPRESENTED AN EFFORT TO RESPOND TO THAT REQUIREMENT IN AS COMPREHENSIVE AND BALANCED A WAY AS POSSIBLE

QUESTION: DID THE DEPARTMENT RECEIVE PROTESTS CONCERNING THE REPORT FROM THE GREEK AND CYPRIOT GOVERNMENTS?

ANSWER: BOTH THE GREEK AND CYPRIOT AMBASSADORS DID EXPRESS CONCERNS, AS DID THE TURKISH AMBASSADOR. I MIGHT ADD THAT SEVERAL GOVERNMENTS HAVE COMMENTED TO US ON THE VARIOUS REPORTS. WE CONSIDER SUCH COMMENTS COMPLETELY APPROPRIATE, AND WE SHALL TAKE THEM INTO ACCOUNT, WHEN WE PREPARE FUTURE REPORTS.

QUESTION: THE COLUMN ALSO SUGGESTED THAT THE PRESIDENT IS PREPARED TO ASK CONGRESS TO APPROVE THE 1976 DEFENSE COOPERATION AGREEMENT WITH TURKEY. DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENT?

ANSWER: THE ADMINISTRATION ENDORSED THE TURKISH AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE LAST YEAR. A DECISION HAS NOT YET BEEN TAKEN AS TO WHAT ACTION WE WILL ASK CONGRESS TO TAKE. THE EUROPE AND MIDDLE EAST SUBCOMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE INTERNATIONAL LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 STATE 057248

RELATIONS COMMITTEE WILL HOLD HEARINGS ON SECURITY ASSISTANCE TO TURKEY AND GREECE IN EARLY APRIL AND I WOULD ANTICIPATE THAT THE ADMINISTRATION WILL MAKE ITS POSITION CLEAR AT THAT TIME.

QUESTION: DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS ON THE SPECIFIC CHARGE THAT THE DEPARTMENT IGNORED DISCRIMINATION AGAINST THE GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCH IN ISTANBUL?

ANSWER: OUR REPORT DID NOT IGNORE THE ALLEGATIONS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST MINORITIES AND THE PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED BY CHURCHES; IN FACT THE REPORT SPECIFICALLY MENTIONED THESE ISSUES. WE CONTINUE TO FOLLOW THIS SITUATION SINCE ANY ALLEGATION OF RELIGIOUS DISCRIMINATION IS A MATTER OF CONCERN TO US. UNQUOTE. VANCE

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